Date: November 9, 1973

Project Title: "Development Plan/Formulate and Evaluate Alternative Plans/Test Alternative Plans"

Project No: C-10-619

Principal Investigator: Dr. Gene E. Willeke

Sponsor: Atlanta Regional Commission

Agreement Period: From October 29, 1973 Until December 31, 1973

Type Agreement: Contract

Amount: $6,813

Reports Required: Monthly progress report

Sponsor Contact Person(s):
Mr. Harry West
Executive Director
Atlanta Regional Commission
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Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Assigned to: ENG

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RA-3 (6-71)
GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
OFFICE OF RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

RESEARCH PROJECT TERMINATION

Date: August 7, 1973

Project Title: Development Plan/Formulate & Evaluate Alternative Plans/Test Alternative Plans

Project No: C-10-019

Principal Investigator: Dr. Gene Williams

Sponsor: Atlanta Regional Commission

Effective Termination Date: June 30, 1974

Clearance of Accounting Charges: All charges have cleared

Grant/Contract Closeout Actions Remaining: None

Assigned to: Environmental Resources Center

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Terminated Project File No: 74-16-013

Other
To: Rod Wilburn, Atlanta Regional Commission

From: Gene E. Willeke

Subject: Public Involvement Program, Regional Development Plan Update

As I have not been able to get as much of the text of the Technical Memorandum on this subject completed as I had anticipated, I am presenting for your consideration an outline of elements of the Public Involvement Program which I believe could be followed by ARC and would meet many of the needs for public involvement in the RDP.

First, let me distinguish between the formal advisory structure to ARC and the more informal program of public involvement. The formal advisory structure, established by the Commission, is primarily under the control of the Commission and of the Advisory Councils themselves. Although they do not operate independently of the staff, they could do so.

The informal programs, on the other hand, is primarily controlled by ARC staff, with the concurrence of the Commission. The opportunity for citizen-initiated activity exists and should be encouraged, but the staff has the primary initiative and responsibility for the informal programs. The difference in control is an important aspect. For the present, I will concentrate attention on the informal programs under staff control.
Memo to Wilburn--Feb. 14, 1974--3

Program Elements

1. Issue identification
   a. By planner, with review by public segments
   b. By public segments
   c. By interaction between public and planner, issue identification meetings

2. Identification of publics
   a. Public is not a unified mass
   b. Public segments identified by
      1) Planner, through knowledge of issues and plan analysis
         (Example: In transportation analysis, taxicab drivers, pilots, airline companies, commuters, community organizations, railroads, etc.)
      2) Advisory Councils, Commission members
         (This could be an explicit function of the formal advisory bodies)
      3) A snowball process
         (Previously identified persons or segments identify others)
      4) Mailing list work
      5) Public meetings attendance lists

3. Mechanisms for interaction
   a. Staff working paper dissemination
   b. RDP brochure--several interim drafts
   c. Briefings, as were used for the Chattahoochee studies
   d. Planning workshops
Memo to Wilburn--Feb. 14, 1974--5

7. Familiarization of staff with public involvement program

8. Planning workshops with a few selected public segments
February 20, 1974

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Rod Wilburn, Atlanta Regional Commission

FROM: Gene E. Willeke, Associate Professor

SUBJECT: Correspondence Lists and Use of Direct Mail as a Public Involvement Technique by the Atlanta Regional Commission

Correspondence by mail and telephone is a key part of any program of public involvement. Its development by society over the centuries has been progressive and has enabled a reduction, though not an elimination, of the face-to-face discussion. Moreover, it enables a more thoughtful communication to take place in as much as one can revise the draft of a letter or other document before sending it by mail to one or more individuals.

While routine correspondence is commonplace in any organization, it can have a sharper, better defined place in a public involvement program if careful attention is given to the correspondence list and the role of direct correspondence. When the correspondence mode is mail, there is the advantage of a permanent record in addition to taking care of the immediate situation.

In this Technical Memorandum, two matters are addressed. First is the correspondence list itself. We will discuss what it can do, how it can be built, how it can be maintained, and some budgeting aspects. Second is the use of direct correspondence. We will consider the purposes and functions of direct correspondence, the message (including pretesting), the package, and followup.
The Correspondence List

What can it do?

The first thing a correspondence list can do is provide a set of data on who is interested in, and/or affected by, the Atlanta Regional Commission. It is certainly obvious that only a small percentage of the region's population know about ARC. An even smaller percentage are sufficiently interested in or have some reason for some kind of contact with ARC. The correspondence list is the primary means of locating those people and maintaining contact with them.

A second thing a correspondence list can do is to provide a partial basis for identifying publics. The public is not an undifferentiated mass of individuals. It is, rather, composed of many social groups with particular interests and reasons for existence. To a considerable degree, the correspondence list can include information of this sort. With such information, individuals and groups can be contacted about those matters most nearly of interest and concern to them.

Finally, the correspondence list is a means of conveying to the public the impression that people are treated as people, of worth and importance to ARC. They are not simply numbers or faceless entities. In order to convey this impression, it is, of course, essential that the correspondence list be accurate and well-maintained. (A negative example in this regard occurred when the U. S. Treasury Department mailed out its first revenue-sharing checks. Many came back marked "Addressee Unknown." How embarrassing not to have the name of a mayor, or to be without the knowledge that a town no longer exists. Yet, it happened and happens routinely in governmental practice.)

How can it be built?

The Atlanta Regional Commission already has a number of mailing lists. Some are maintained as more or less official lists of the agency and used for regular mailings of such materials as ARC ACTION. Other lists are maintained by Departments, Divisions, and individuals within the agency for their own specialized use.
Having a basic correspondence list is, of course, an excellent start for a full, comprehensive list. In order to build it to that status, several steps can be taken.

1. Verify the accuracy of the names, addresses and other information on the existing lists.

2. Categorize the names on the existing lists in as usable a fashion as possible. Each name probably lends itself to categorization in several ways, and this step should be done.

3. People who correspond with ARC should be added to the list, at least for a specified period of time, say, one year. Where a letter is received on letterhead, most of the basic information needed can be obtained from information contained there, such as address, phone number, and some means of categorization. If there are missing pieces, a telephone or mail inquiry to that person can be used to fill in the gaps.

4. Whenever ARC sponsors a meeting, whether it be a briefing, a public hearing, a Commission meeting, etc., an attendance list should be taken, preferably by use of a standard card asking for the necessary information, and designed for easy processing by the Data Center.

5. The Commission and the Advisory Councils should be asked periodically for assistance in adding names to the correspondence list.

6. An analysis of organizations and associations should be done periodically, from the Yellow Pages and from such sources as the Chamber of Commerce, the Community Council, etc., to ascertain whether organizations with a probable interest in ARC are included.

7. Registration records of planning-related events may be used. MARTA meetings, DOT hearings, hearings sponsored by local government Planning Departments, and perhaps even such events as the annual housing exhibition at the Civic Center. In the event ARC sponsors exhibits at fairs, exhibitions, conventions, etc., cards like those mentioned in Item 4 should be used to add to the list.

8. Special Procedures - If, for some reason, it is suspected that certain groups which should be on the correspondence list are either absent or underrepresented, some additional steps can be taken.
If a particular geographic territory is in question, general directories such as the Polk directory on the criss-cross telephone directory can be used. Either a sample (preferred approach) or a full listing can be made. Alternatively, community leaders in that area can be asked for names.

For certain specialized purposes, mailing lists can be obtained from Direct Mail advertising firms or list brokers. A startling array of lists is available from these sources. For example, lists of civic leaders, presidents of clubs and organizations, manufacturing firms, are included in the catalog published by Dunhill International List, Inc., in New York.

9. Small Lists at ARC - Individuals and Departments at ARC should be encouraged to put their lists on a Data Center file; if they have not already done so. Obstacles to doing this should be minimized.

Maintaining the List

The names, addresses, phone numbers, organizational affiliation, etc., change often enough in the Atlanta area that considerable attention should be given to maintaining the list and periodically cleaning it. Moreover, new names will be added continually, necessitating an orderly, efficient way to maintain it.

The maintenance process should provide for the following actions:

1. Correction of Inaccuracies - This can be handled by routinely reporting corrections to the Data Center for updating or, in the event some list is not maintained by the Data Center, in the original correspondence file of an individual or Department. Standardization of this process would be helpful, though it should not be allowed to become burdensome and bureaucratic. To properly maintain a correspondence list, obstacles to this process should be removed wherever they are found.

2. Adding Names - This can be a routine operation, handled in the same way as Correcting Inaccuracies. The problem here does not lie in the mechanical aspects of getting into a computer file, because the Data Center seems well-equipped to handle this process. Rather, the problem is getting individuals who have names to add to send them through the appropriate process.
3. **Deleting Names** - There are times when names should be deleted from a correspondence list. Obvious reasons are the death or departure from the area of the person, cessation of interest in ARC, change of position within an organization with consequent passage of the position to someone else, etc. Additionally, some persons request their names be removed from a list.

When a direct communication is received from someone on the list that his name should be removed, the process is, of course, very simple. The removal is handled just as was done for an addition.

Beyond direct requests, list cleaning should be done periodically. A card is sent to names on the list telling the recipient the list is being checked. It should show the current information maintained in the file and have a place for the recipient to correct that information. When the lists are returned the list is changed accordingly. For those who do not reply, a second mailing or a telephone inquiry may be used to ensure that a name really should be dropped rather than that the person simply had not had time to respond or had been unable, for whatever reason, to reply.

We recommend use of a complete list cleaning annually. Cards would be sent to every person in the correspondence list. Additionally, if there is reason to wonder whether some change, say in ZIP codes or phone numbers, is big enough to warrant additional cleaning, cleaning cards can be sent to a sample of the correspondence list. Every tenth name would probably be sufficient for lists in the length range of 2,000 to 5,000. For longer lists, the sampling fraction can be less.

A final aspect of list cleaning is verification. When a change is made, whether by addition of a name or correction of a name, a sample mailing should be made to that address, using, say, a postcard, with a request for return of a verification card.

**Categorization**

The Data Center computer program appears to have ample capability to handle such categorization needs as ARC will have. Basic lists are now
maintained in the file in ZIP code order, which facilitates mailing of ARC ACTION.

We recommend a few kinds of categories be considered by the ARC staff. The staff will certainly wish to add to or delete from these suggestions of categories.

1. ZIP code
2. Individual or organization
3. Type of organization
4. ARC Commissioner District
5. Media
6. Aspect of ARC functions of interest to named individual or organization.

Budgeting

The costs of building, maintaining, and using correspondence lists need to be borne somewhere within the organization. The costs are relatively small, especially if they are broken down by department of the agency. Two factors should be considered in budgeting. First, sufficient funds must be available. Second, the budgeting and accounting procedures should be such as to encourage rather than discourage use of the lists. A general administrative account would be a logical approach. We do not wish to make a specific recommendation beyond the two principles because we have not probed into the budget-making process of ARC and consider it beyond our scope.
Direct Correspondence

Direct correspondence is intended to include mail, telephone, and any other means of conveying a message to some person other than by face-to-face contact. Examples of the latter might be teletype or facsimile transmission.

Direct correspondence in the context of the Regional Development Plan Update needs to be considered from the standpoints of communicating with people outside the agency and inside the agency. To the RDP staff, both are "publics."

Functions

Five basic functions can be performed through direct correspondence.

1. Disseminate and collect information
2. Establish personal contact
3. Influence thoughts and actions of others
4. Build an image
5. Build morale and rapport

These functions may overlap and be done simultaneously at times. The disseminating and collecting of information, for example, can be a means of establishing personal contact and building an image.

The function of disseminating and collecting information requires no special discussion at this time. The outgoing correspondence sends information. It may also ask for information.

Establishing personal contact is done by using direct correspondence as the first step in a relationship. Groundwork may be laid for future contacts.

Influencing thought and action by use of direct correspondence is carried out both through the image of the agency portrayed in the correspondence and through the information transmitted in the correspondence. We are not referring here to threats and political maneuvers but about relevant data and analyses.

Image building is done by the content, format, timeliness, etc. of the correspondence. It is desirable, as a policy matter, to decide what the desired image is. The ARC logo, an arch or umbrella, is an example. It has
been a persistent symbol of ARC, heavily laden with content. The consistency of format in ARC ACTION likewise is image building. For example, if an agency chooses to be a supplier of data, then its communications should supply data. If it wishes to be an implementer of programs and projects, perhaps it would choose to set them before the public as goals to achieve and to show the record of accomplishments.

Morale building is of primary concern among agency staff. It is done by timely, accurate communications that enable a feeling of being kept informed without being overwhelmed with information.

**Basic Elements**

The basic elements in the use of direct correspondence are
- The list
- The message
- The package
- The follow-up

The list was discussed in the previous section. The remaining elements are dealt with in this section.

**Message.** The message is a statement of the purpose of the correspondence, and the content which gives substance to the purpose. The purpose can be to get information to the reader which the agency wants him to have, or a request for action, or a request for information, etc.

We believe it is important to avoid gimmickry as much as possible in the message. The danger of gimmickry is a loss of credibility, and credibility is a very important factor to a public agency. Moreover, the reader may well get the feeling he is not regarded as highly as he should be. We do not want to give the impression that we advocate a stiff, scholarly approach to direct correspondence. On the contrary, we simply want to avoid the comic.

To amplify on this point, direct mail advertisers advocate use of formulas such as the following type (AIDA) in preparing a direct mail message.
- Get Attention
- Arouse Interest
- Stimulate Desire
- Ask for Action
Such a formulation is a very reasonable one for ARC to use. However, it would be unwise to make ARC correspondence look like a direct mail sales pitch. This is where the gimmickry needs to be avoided. Getting attention and arousing interest can ordinarily be done by simply stating the purpose of the communication in clear, unmistakable language.

The Package

The package is the sum of the envelope, letter, and anything else sent in one mailing. Generally there should be only one message per package, although this could include more than one item. When two or more messages are sent in one package, the reader is likely to get confused, and may either ignore the package (if the first item he sees does not interest him) or get his response jumbled, rendering it useless. In those instances where there is a secondary message in the package, it should be a simple one and easy to understand (e.g., a meeting announcement).

Follow-Up

The follow-up phase (also referred to in the literature as the fulfillment phase) includes:

a) assessment of effectiveness,
b) handling of inquiries, and
c) carrying out those actions which the message says will happen.

These three elements are quite different but each contribute to the effectiveness of direct correspondence.

Measuring the effectiveness of direct correspondence may be gauged in several ways. Percentage of responses to a query would be a measure. Number and nature of inquiries received by the agency about the correspondence would be another. Visits to the agency office promoted by the staff or number of requests for staff visits to the recipients would be yet another. Finally, in some cases it is possible to observe the actions taken by correspondence recipients to follow through on the message conveyed by the correspondence.

If the effectiveness of the correspondence is less than desired, the list, the message, and the package should be re-examined. If deficiencies
are found, adjustments can be made. For example, more pretesting of messages and packages might be done.

Handling inquiries about the correspondence is a matter of agency policy. We recommend that all inquiries be answered with a letter, phone call, or visit. The answers should be prompt. This is a rather hard thing to put into practice for many people. The desire to reply with a good answer, time pressures, insufficient staff support, etc. all contribute to time delays in replying to inquiries. A logging of correspondence received and sent, with some provision for memory-jogging, is one technique that may be used to make improvements in this element.

Carrying out the actions which the message says will happen can be crucial in building agency credibility. If, over time, this kind of follow-through does not occur, there would be a tendency to cut off correspondence between the public and the agency. The ARC mail ballot, used in conjunction with the WSB-TV show in December, 1973, is an example. It was stated in the ballot instructions that responses to the ballot would be used in the Regional Development Plan. At some point, it will be necessary for ARC to say just how these responses were used.
Technical Memorandum

To: Rod Wilburn, ARC

From: Gene E. Willeke

Subject: Media Calendar and Use of Media

A media calendar is a device used to plan the use of media as part of a public information and/or public involvement program. It can be used as both an administrative and budgeting tool, and is a reflection of agency policy. The device shows a schedule of media events, such as a television show (with the events leading up to that show), newspaper coverage, magazine articles, etc.

In ARC, it is not apparent that there has been an overall media program. Each separate division within ARC has, to some extent, carried out its own media program. Mailing lists, news releases, etc., have been prepared in these divisions, often with the assistance of the Public Information Office. However, these media events have not been under the supervision of the Public Information Office. One effect has been a somewhat haphazard use of media for the agency as a whole. We do not think this is a situation unique to ARC. It is likely characteristic of many agencies of government. However, it is possible to improve on the overall effectiveness of media usage. The media calendar offers one approach to doing it.

The use of media should be controlled by a comprehensive media program based in the overall policy of the agency. In saying this, we are not advocating a rigid system that is not adaptable to changing needs, but we are advocating a means of maintaining some coherence in media usage.
ARC has certain policies, goals and objectives. It may or may not have one on media usage. If we may make a comparison with private sector business, we see a close linkage between company policies and media campaigns. As recently as winter, 1973, oil advertising was concentrated on getting the consumer to purchase a particular brand of gasoline. Advertisements of clean rest rooms, special additives, speedy and efficient service, etc. were the rule. With the advent of the energy crisis and talk of windfall profits, the emphases have shifted dramatically. Now, we see full-page ads telling why we cannot get gasoline as easily and cheaply as before. Clearly, the objectives of the oil companies have shifted. Instead of trying to induce the consumer to buy a particular brand, they are trying to combat the rising tide of public resentment against them.

The policies, goals, and objectives of a public agency like ARC are more complex, diffuse, and abstract than in a private concern. Moreover, a public agency has more or less monopolistic functions. But, when a public agency uses media, it is in competition with every other user of media, whether public or private. Once an agency uses media, it begins to create an image in the public consciousness. The public then begins to compare the image it has of ARC's efficiency and effectiveness in what it does with the image it has of Exxon's efficiency and effectiveness in what it does. If ARC's image comes up short of most other media users' images, then ARC's ability to function can be hampered.

Because ARC is a public agency, it is not allowed the luxury of simply being as good as or better than other similar agencies. The public must perceive it as being as efficient and effective as other media users. If this is not accomplished, then the questions of "Just what is planning?", "What is it good for?", "What do planners do?", etc. will always be in the minds of the people. The planning process can be restricted. Public
officials such as the Commissioners and the staff will constantly have to defend the work of ARC. Additionally, public officials, including Commissioners, may have to be reassured as to ARC's work progress because of demands from the public. We believe that, to the extent public apprehension toward ARC is irrational (and we are not alleging necessarily that it is), such apprehension can be at least partially avoided by judicious use of media. Indeed, it can enhance the scrutiny of plans and proposals by the public.

There are basically two objectives of media for ARC. First is public information, a purely media function analogous to a monologue. Public information has two subobjectives: creating a desired image and satisfying the public's right and desire to know what is going on.

The other basic objective is citizen participation. This is not completely a media function, though media usage is a part of it. In using media for citizen participation, some type of dialogue is desired. There are a couple of subobjectives here also: presenting a desired image and satisfying the public's right and desire to participate.

A media program need not be designed exclusively for public information or for citizen participation but should include both, in our opinion. However, the media program will likely be weighted to one side or the other and this weighting should result from stated agency policy. The media calendar should reflect this weighting.

Examples of the effects of weighting a media calendar may help illustrate the point, particularly as it pertains to budgeting. If the calendar is to be weighted toward public information, the major portion of the budget might go to salaries for persons to prepare and supervise press releases, purchasing time and space in mass media outlets, and salaries or consultant fees for persons capable of putting together informative, gripping (or engrossing) television and radio programs. Likewise, less of the budget would be devoted to the use of questionnaires.
After budgeting and policy determinations are complete, the calendar is designed and used as an administrative tool. The calendar shows when such events as newsletter mailings and television programs will occur, but it will also include the events leading up to these culminating dates, such as deadlines for inputs from individuals or departments.

As a supplement to the basic media calendar, we would suggest the use of separate files for each type of media and a monthly manpower and budget sheet, broken down by type of media, as additional administrative tools.

**Types of Media**

We want to summarize here what each type of media can be expected to do. Each medium carries some type of message best and can reach a particular segment of society (audience). We will discuss: direct mail, magazines, newspapers, outdoor advertising, radio, television, and transit advertising.

**Direct Mail.** Direct mail was discussed in our earlier technical memorandum of February 20, 1974. The functions of direct mail are to a) disseminate and collect information, b) establish personal contact, c) influence thought and actions of others, d) build an image, and e) build morale and rapport. It can carry almost any kind of message from the most complex to the simplest. It can also reach any group effectively if a proper list is set up and maintained.

**Magazines.** Magazines or periodicals other than newspapers may be quite useful to ARC. Local publications are often short of good copy and would be willing to publish articles written by someone at ARC. These articles can be used to get across complex messages concerning the agency or the planning process to readers of the publication. Even _Atlanta_ magazine might be a good outlet. Advertisements or articles in local editions of national publications, and advertisements in local publications can be used to convey simple or less complex messages.

Audiences for magazines vary considerably, but each knows quite a bit about that audience. Choice of magazine should be determined by who is to be reached, rather than simply where space is most available or cheapest.
A big advantage of magazines is that they are usually less concerned with late-breaking news. This means that arrangements for an article or an ad can be made months in advance. This time lag gives the author time to gather input, compose, and rewrite the article, with extensive reviews if desired.

**Newspapers.** Newspapers are widely utilized as a medium by ARC, not always by its own choice, but often through some degree of ARC control, such as the news release. Both the news release and the press conference are appropriate for this function.

A key disadvantage to the use of newspapers is their concern with late-breaking news. Newspapers also are not suitable for conveying highly complex messages. Announcements of staff changes, survey results, and initiation of studies or milestones in those studies are appropriate for the newspaper. However, they can not be used to convey complex messages such as the planning process or the nature of the Regional Development Plan.

Newspaper ads, like magazine ads, must be short, relatively simple, and with a single message or, at most, a small number of messages. Newspapers, like magazines, have accurate statistics on their readership, and this should be obtained by ARC to aid in focusing a newspaper communication.

**Outdoor Advertising.** Outdoor advertising is suitable for very simple messages. When confined to this realm, it is effective and inexpensive. For example, notification of a public hearing in a given geographic territory can be done, in part, by posters or signs prepared by the graphics department and displayed by neighborhood residents or in public areas. They are effective in reaching persons of all socio-economic groups who live or work in the posted area. Billboards and other forms of commercial outdoor advertising would be effective, but are probably too costly for routine use.
Radio. Radio can be used to convey a wide range of messages, both complex and simple. However, radio does not carry any accurate visual image and tends to emphasize the personalities of the individual rather than the ideas presented. Neither limitation is necessarily bad, but users must be aware they exist and adjust for them.

Again, the listening audience is different not only for each station but for different times of the day and week. WSB reaches a different audience than WXAP. Radio stations have audience information which can be obtained. As in the case of magazines, radio time can be scheduled months in advance giving the agency time to develop a suitable program.

Television. Like radio, television can convey a wide range of messages. It can also present a visual message to reinforce the spoken word. Again, TV emphasizes the personality over the message. The visual impact may heighten this emphasis.

The television viewing public is not as homogeneous for one channel as is radio. Persons from all walks of life may watch a given station, though not necessarily at the same time. Like radio and magazines, TV time can be arranged months in advance and should be. If the program is not so dated that it loses its impact almost immediately, a film of the program can be used at group meetings.

Transit Advertising. Transit advertising should only be used to convey simple messages. It is very effective for this and can reach a variety of people. Although we do not have a specific instance where this medium would be appropriate, such an occasion may arise.

Multiple Channels

One of the points of the media calendar is to emphasize a mix of media, with each selected to do a particular job. No one medium can do the
whole media job for ARC. Newspaper ads, radio spots, etc. might be used to boost readership of a magazine article or a television show. Posters might increase attendance at a public meeting. Direct mail might be used to sharpen response to a magazine article. The media calendar allows coordination of these various approaches.
March 20, 1974

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Rod Wilburn
FROM: Gene E. Willeke
SUBJECT: Functions of Advisory Councils

The Advisory Councils, as presently constituted, are composed of persons who, in some sense, are representatives of organizations. They serve for a relatively long period of time and meet regularly. A group such as this can perform some valuable functions relative to citizen involvement in planning. However, they cannot do everything. Of the possible roles available to the Councils, it is advisable that the Councils, the staff, and the Commission choose those functions which can be of most value to the planning efforts of ARC and that the roles are well-understood by all parties.

Before considering the possible roles, it is desirable to consider some of the characteristics of Advisory Council members. First, they are organizational representatives. Thus, they have some obligations to their organizations, both in terms of fairly representing their positions and in terms of communicating back to those organizations. Second, a Council member cannot devote a great deal of time to Council activities. Third, a Council member can acquire considerable familiarity with the issues, the data, and the content of a given planning activity. Indeed, this familiarity can ordinarily be acquired with greater ease by a Council member than by a staff member because the staff can supply so much information and interpretation to the Councils. A Council member sees planning unfold as though he were watching time-lapse photography; the sweeping panorama unfolds before him within a very few hours of his time, though it is applied over many months. By contrast, the staff member is immersed in planning activities every day; the planning drama unfolds one frame at a time, often very slowly.

As outlined in a previous Technical Memorandum, one function of the Advisory Councils should be the identification of publics. In performing this function, the Council members are asked to help determine who is affected by a proposed plan and who is interested in or should be interested in participating in the planning activities. The Councils should be well-equipped to perform this function and it is of great value.
The third method of eliciting information is through a telephone survey. This will be done by means of temporary help employed by ARC. The sample size will be about 500, drawn from the new metro Atlanta telephone directory. The same questionnaire will be used as appeared in the newspaper and was mailed to the community organizations. The telephone survey will begin on Monday, December 10. Telephone interviews will be conducted during the morning, afternoon, and evening hours for the next 2-3 days.

Results of the three sets of surveys will be compiled separately and compared with each other. It should be possible to give some preliminary results within a week of the TV show. These results would be primarily from the telephone interviews and the early newspaper returns. A sampling of the newspaper replies will likely be necessary in order to get such fast response. If sampling is done, a full tabulation would be done at a later time.

By using this three-pronged approach, we get

a) a reading on the feelings of people interested enough to reply to the newspaper questionnaire, but not necessarily a random sample;

b) a reading on a random sample of the population; and

c) a reading on the feelings of relatively informed community leaders.

ARC will be in a good position to tell the public what the surveys revealed and will have something to use in the RDP work almost immediately.
MEMORANDUM

To: Harry West, Atlanta Regional Commission

From: Gene E. Willeke, Environmental Resources Center and Department of City Planning

Subject: Public Involvement Activities, Regional Development Plan Update

This memorandum summarizes the current status of Georgia Tech's assistance to the Atlanta Regional Commission in the RDP update. Since a major part of the effort to date has gone into the preparation of the December 9 WSB-TV program, primary emphasis is given to the methods that will be used to obtain feedback from the television audience.

The WSB-TV program was intended to be modelled in part on the Regional Plan Association's "Choices for '76" series in New York. The lead time was far too short to duplicate that series and the associated events. It was not possible, for example, to organize small groups of people to watch the program together. Nor was it possible to prepare extensive background documents for study before the TV program.

The format for the show is now one that includes about 40 minutes devoted to regional problems, issues, the RDP planning process, and the initial alternatives. The last 20 minutes is a panel discussion moderated by John Pruitt of WSB. Composition of the panel is now being determined.

Audience feedback is being measured and elicited in three ways. First, we will have a questionnaire printed in the December 9 Atlanta Journal-Constitution metro Atlanta edition. Readers will fill out the questionnaire and mail it back to the Atlanta Regional Commission. For this first TV show, it is our intention to ask the reader to put the questionnaire in their own envelope, their own stamp, and mail it. For a second show, we may revise that procedure somewhat.

The second method of obtaining feedback is through community organizations. We will send the questionnaire to a fairly large number of organizations, about 250. The Community Information Clearinghouse has agreed to let us use their list of organizations, and to mail the questionnaire at their expense. They have a well-developed polling procedure that is quite useful at this stage. The Community Information Clearinghouse list will be checked against the ARC list of organizations. If any of the ARC organizations is not included in the CIC list, the ARC organizations will be sent a questionnaire under ARC auspices.
Second, the Councils can help in the assessment of plan impacts—social, economic, environmental, political. In order to perform this vital function, the Council needs to be presented with enough information about a plan or plan alternative to enable a Council member to visualize impacts. It also needs to be available to Council members early enough that they can think about it before the staff or the Commission needs to make some decision. In performing this impact assessment function, the Council should not be expected to get into all the details but should be encouraged to work on the general dimensions of impact.

Third, the Councils can assist in developing alternatives to be considered in the planning process. This is a general function of citizen participation and usually is a very positive result. For a variety of reasons I will not go into now, a planner frequently omits from consideration some alternatives that merit consideration. This is not necessarily a fault of the planner.

Fourth, the Councils can sometimes be a source of information. Certain kinds of information and contacts with knowledgeable persons are more easily obtained from organizations of the type represented on the Councils than in any other way.

Fifth, the Councils should be looked to for advice. This is a continuous process and overlaps with the impact assessment process and the development of alternatives. It also gets into the evaluation and selection of plan elements. In order to perform this function, the staff needs to sort out those things for which judgement is required and present them to the Councils. The staff should not expect the Councils to go through all the details and steps that have been done by the staff, though they should be open to examination and questioning on such points.

Sixth, the Councils may be looked to as approving, legitimizing bodies. While there is merit to this, and it should be a part of the Councils activities, it is easy to make this function the sole function of the Councils, at which point it becomes duplicative of the Commission itself and frustrating for Council members.

Seventh, the Councils can play a role in plan implementation. ARC actions are often implemented by the constituent governments. The citizens serving on the Councils are a link between ARC and those governments.

Eighth, the Council members can give leverage to ARC staff members. Rather than having an ARC staff member speak to each of the 40 groups, the Council members can be carrying back a message to their constituencies. The ARC staff role should be to facilitate such activities.

I have not addressed directly the relationship between the Councils and the Commission. If the Councils perform the functions outlined above, relationships with the Commission should not be difficult to work out. The advisory role is an especially important one. The Commissioners spend relatively little time on the actions presented to them. Being a Commissioner is a part-time role for nearly all, perhaps all the Commissioners. The Councils thus could provide the review of important actions to be taken by the Commission from the standpoint
Two further comments about the Councils are in order. First, as presently constituted, there is no place for unorganized citizens on the Councils. Thus, the viewpoints expressed by the Councils are not complete expressions of public concerns. I do not have a recommendation to make in this regard, but it merits consideration. If the Councils are used to identify the affected publics, the problem can be reduced somewhat.

Finally, the Councils and other citizen advisory activities should meet pertinent legal requirements. I will not go into those at this time, but assume ARC is attempting to remain in conformance with these requirements.